

**Media Release**

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**Wonders shall never end!**

The Melrose Gallery takes pleasure in announcing the upcoming launch of Edozie Anedu’s latest solo titled ‘Wonders Shall Never End’. The exhibition features a series of paintings created in 2022 and follows on from his well-received show with Unit London in 2021. The exhibition will be presented at The Melrose Gallery Johannesburg from 1 to 31 July 2022 and on a viewing room on [www.themelrosegallery.com](http://www.themelrosegallery.com) .

Anedu is a self-taught artist based in Benin City in Nigeria. He works with mixed media to create stylised imagery that references graffiti and mural art traditions. Anedu’s practice centres around popular culture, music, fashion and the human experience. He applies his paint in thick impasto, and his figures often have a cartoon like quality, almost childlike and naïve in nature. This style, imbued with a wonderful sense of humour, is presented in juxtaposition to his powerful and important messaging which is often highlighted in the form of text applied to the canvas.

In *Wonders shall never End!* Anedu surveys our society’s cultural landscape and the abundance of art therein. Where does it come from, and why does it never run out? He describes this body of work as an adventure, a journey that explores what makes us art.

This series encapsulates his wonder at the resilience of the mind, and the endurance of art and of humanity, in our capacity for reflection, abstraction, and creation.

The oldest art known to have been made by early man dates as far back as 73,000 years ago. Despite the circumstances of life, in a time when all available human resources went towards surviving a daunting subsistence, our distant ancestors made time to create art. This happened simultaneously and independently, across thousands of diverse cultures, across the globe. In a similar appraisal of our contemporary society, permeated by socio-political turmoil, economic hardship, and neoteric phenomena like the covid19 pandemic, one would predict artistic decline, yet we have seen the contrary to be the case.

The implication is staggering: art has never been optional for human society.

The artist recalls strong feelings of relief and reassurance in his childhood. Hope for continuity manifested itself in the persistence of innovation; new music, street anthems, fashion trends, video games, new movies, and home videos even despite hard times. The body of works also expands on those created for ‘Allegory’, which explored semiotics, examining how meaning is made and communicated. These ideas stem from Anedu’s experience growing up in the Catholic Church, surrounded by religious iconography. As a result he became increasingly conscious of the connection between symbolism and the progression of doctrine.

As he reviews his own relationship to art as a viewer and consumer rather than a creator, Anedu invites you on his journey, investigating art in all its forms as a perpetuation of memory and of culture, a glowing example of the endurance of humanity itself. This is a call to unpack and appreciate the profound beauty of an abundance in art that is self-renewing, increasingly complex, and increasingly beautiful with every passing year.

ARTIST PROFILE:

Edozie Anedu is a self-taught artist based in Benin City, Nigeria. Working primarily with oils, acrylics, pastels, and recycled materials, Anedu’s paintings employ elemental forms and figures that verge on the abstract. He references graffiti and mural art traditions to focus his work on popular culture, music and fashion, socio political ideologies and the human condition.

Drawing from personal experience, Anedu’s unflinching use of color and often aggressive brush strokes express a freedom of emotion that commands the viewers’ attention. His childlike and seemingly haphazard strokes are in conversation with his own coming of age story - a journey of excitement, growth and enthusiastic approach to the future. His work embraces a synthesis of innocence, trial and error, memory, and melancholy.

About The Melrose Gallery:

Dubbed *'The Gallery of the People'*, The Melrose Gallery is a leading Pan African Contemporary Gallery located in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Passionate about African culture and traditions, the gallery has become a home in which artists, collectors and the public gather as a community to present and celebrate their stories, lives and creative practices in contemporary ways.

Their spaces are dynamic, constantly adapting and challenging preconceived ideas and limitations to creative practice and encouraging lively discourse around issues of pertinence to Pan African art.

They represent iconic artists of the likes of Dr Esther Mahlangu, Dr Willie Bester, Mam Noria Mabasa and Pitika Ntuli and an exciting group of young guards from the Continent of Africa.

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